

Message Text

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11

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 INR-10 LAB-06

NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 DODE-00 PA-03 USIA-15 PRS-01

SPC-03 NIC-01 DRC-01 SAJ-01 /080 W

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P R 051435Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6819

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

USMISSION BERLIN

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, PINT, FI

SUBJECT: SOCIAL DEMOCRATS TAKE CONTROL OF WOOD

PROCESSING WORKERS

1. IN AN ELECTION WHICH COULD BE WATERSHED IN
FINNISH LABOR HISTORY SOCIAL DEMOCRATS WON A NARROW
VICTORY TO TAKE CONTROL OF A NEWLY MERGED UNION IN
THE WOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRY. VOTING WAS HELD
SEPTEMBER 21-28 AND RESULTS WERE TALLIED AND
ANNOUNCED LATE LAST NIGHT, OCTOBER 4. NEW UNION,
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WHICH WILL HAVE ABOUT 50,000 MEMBERS AND BE THIRD

LARGEST INDUSTRIAL UNION IN FINNISH FEDERATION OF
TRADE UNIONS, COMBINES OLD COMMUNIST-LED "WOOD
UNION" OF 35,000 MEMBERS AND ALMOST PURELY SOCIAL
DEMOCRATIC "WOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRY WORKERS' UNION"
OF 15,000 MEMBERS.

2. ABOUT 65 PERCENT OF THOSE ELIGIBLE TO PARTICIPATE
IN THE ELECTIONS VOTED AND THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS
RECEIVED 14,000 VOTES TO 13,130 FOR THE COMMUNISTS.
THIS WILL MEAN THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS WILL HAVE ABOUT
155 DELEGATES AND THE COMMUNISTS 145 AT THE NEW
UNION'S FOUNDING CONGRESS AT THE END OF OCTOBER.

3. THE ELECTION SHOULD STRENGTHEN THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS
THROUGHOUT THE FINNISH LABOR MOVEMENT. IT IS A SECOND
MAJOR BLOW THE FINNISH COMMUNISTS HAVE SUFFERED THIS
WEEK, FINLAND'S SIGNATURE OF ITS FREE TRADE AGREEMENT
WITH THE COMMON MARKET BEING THE OTHER. THE COMMUNISTS
IN THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT ARE NOT GOING TO WITHER
AWAY BUT THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS HOPE THEY HAVE NOW
DEFINITELY ESTABLISHED THAT THE MOMENTUM ON THEIR
SIDE.
KREHBIEL

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